THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. At India's request a Panel was established by the Dispute Settlement Body of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to examine India's claims in it's dispute with the United States titled "United States— Rules of Origin for Textiles and Apparel Products". In its final report the panel has not ruled in India's favour.

(b) The unilateral changes in the United States Rules of Origin are applicable from 1996 and, therefore, there are no new effects due to the Panel's ruling. At that time, the changes did affect India's grey cotton fabrics exports to countries such as Sri Lanka which used them for processing and exports to US.

Fraudulent exports

1494. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR:
SHRI EKENATH K. THAKUR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it was discovered that some spice exporters imported black pepper of other country origin and re-exported the same as Malabar Gold-I Quality pepper which commands a premium quality in the international market;

(b) if so, whether the exporters have been suspended;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the French authorities detained a consignment of Red Chillies from India at Marseilles after an analysis revealed that these contained Sudan-I, a carcinogenic red dye; and

(d) what mechanism is in place at Indian ports to inspect the quality of Indian produce before shipment overseas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Spices Board has suspended the certificate of registration as exporter of spices of two concerned exporters.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Whereas inspection of export consignments of spices is not mandatory, exporters desirous of getting their consignments inspected and certified, for purposes of fulfilling importing countries requirements, may avail the services of recognized Government/ Private agencies.

Policy to check open import

†1495. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of sick industrial units all over the country as per the Economic Survey of 2002-03 and whether the reasons for sickness of these units is to allow the open import;

(b) if so, whether Government have formulated any policy to check open import; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) It is reported in the Economic Survey 2002-03 that according to information compiled by RBI from scheduled Commercial Banks, as on March, 2001 there were 2,52,947 sick/weak units consisting of 2,49,630 in the SSI Sector and 3,317 units in the non-SSI sector. The Survey has not ascribed removal of Quantitative Restrictions on imports as the cause of sickness of these units.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Consultation on non-agricultural market access negotiations at WTO

1496. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government plan to hold extensive consultations with the industry on the issues relating to ongoing

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.